

Committee:	Date:
Safer City Partnership	25/02/2021
Subject: Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) funding – criteria for organisations to access	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter – Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Decision
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<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>The Safer City Partnership Strategy Strategic Plan 2019–2022 sets out the key aims the partnership seeks to achieve to increase community safety and reduce and prevent crime. An important means of accomplishing this is via the funding of initiatives for the benefit of the community. The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) provides provisions for a portion of the value of seized criminal assets to be redistributed to fund community safety and crime reduction initiatives. Traditionally, Safer City Partnership Members have submitted proposals to secure funding for such projects, which has been allocated through a competitive application process.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proposal</p> <p>It is now proposed that the criteria for those who can access funding is expanded, to include organisations such as charities and community groups. The aim of this is to create a more inclusive funding process, as well as to encourage new perspectives and ideas when it comes to community safety initiatives. A stringent criterion for those seeking funding has been developed to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency.</p> <p>The renewed guidance reflects Government advice on how POCA funds should be utilised.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to review and accept the recommended funding criteria framework.</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. The Safer City Partnership (SCP) Strategy Group has agreed the following outcomes for 2019–2022. These have been developed in consultation with our partners and communities and are also informed by the data we hold, national

priorities and key documents such as the City of London Police's Strategic Assessment and the City of London Policing Plan 2020–23 (including the refreshed plan for 2021–22).

2. The SCP strategy and implementation plans are legal requirements for all community safety partnerships, to keep all members and our communities informed of the work carried out by all agencies involved.
3. The SCP strategy 2019–2022 outcomes are as follow:
 - a. Vulnerable people and communities are protected and safeguarded
 - b. People are safe from violent crime and any violence against the person
 - c. People and businesses are protected from theft/fraud and acquisitive crime
 - d. Anti-Social Behaviour is tackled and responded to effectively
 - e. People are safe and feel safe in the Night-time Economy.
4. Taking into account the City of London Policing Plan 2020–23 (and the refreshed plan for 2021–22), an additional key outcome is:
 - a. Countering terrorism
5. The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) allows for the value of a portion of seized criminal assets to be redistributed to support community safety and/or crime prevention/reduction initiatives for the benefit of the community.
6. Safer City Partnership members only have traditionally submitted proposals to obtain funding for community safety/crime reduction projects.
7. We are committed to ensuring that we have an impact on our outcomes in the Square Mile. We will continue to closely monitor performance across a range of measures, through qualitative and quantitative measures.
8. Please find in Appendix 1 the recommended criteria for expanding the types of organisations that are able to apply for POCA funding.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Safer City Partnership Strategy: POCA funding criteria

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Appendix 1

Safer City Partnership Strategy: POCA funding criteria

The Safer City Partnership POCA fund guidance 2021

The Safer City Partnership (SCP) plays a central role in reducing crime and other harms that affect those who live, learn, work and visit the City of London. By working with statutory and non-statutory partners, we work to implement plans which help to improve the safety and wellbeing of those in the Square Mile, while tackling the key causes of crime. A multi-agency initiative, the SCP allows us to develop projects around key themes and priorities in order to effect positive change within the City. The SCP takes into account the priorities and strategies of its members when formulating SCP plans and ambitions, including documents such as the City of London Police Policing Plan 2020–23.

We are ambitious in our vision for the City of London: it should be a safe place to live, learn, work and visit.

Funding: the context

A central component of funding to support projects which help to create a safer and more pleasant City is obtained from the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA). This legislation grants the police and other public bodies the power to confiscate assets and cash from individuals who are convicted of offences or – on the balance of probability – have benefitted from their illegal activities. This also includes assets which have not been able to be returned to their original owners. A portion of the value of recovered assets is then committed to fund local crime-fighting and community safety priorities for the benefit of the community.

We are committed to ensuring that those who have engaged in criminal activity will see their assets contribute towards reducing crime and making our communities safer.

At present, the funding from POCA provides grants for initiatives proposed by SCP members, with funding allocated through a competitive application process.

We now plan to broaden the criteria for who can apply for funding. This will include community groups and charities, among other organisations. This change is being implemented with the aim of creating a more inclusive funding process, as well as to encourage new ideas and initiatives which will benefit the people and businesses of the City of London.

This renewed guidance is in line with Government guidance for how POCA funding should be distributed: namely to improve community safety and reduce crime for the benefit of the communities we serve.

Grants available

Grants available range from £1,000 to £50,000.

What should the focus of initiatives requesting funding be?

Priority areas

In line with the priorities of the SCP, applications for funding should focus on at least one of the following key areas:

- Anti-Social Behaviour is tackled and responded to effectively
- People and businesses are protected from theft and fraud/acquisitive crime
- People are safe and feel safe in the Night-Time Economy
- People are safe from violent crime and violence against the person
- Vulnerable people and communities are protected and safeguarded from crime

The SCP takes into account the strategic aims and priorities of its members, including the City of London Police (and its Policing Plan 2020–23). Consequently, the SCP's priorities are broadly aligned with those of the City Police and of other SCP members. However, given the nature and focus of some criminal activity dealt with almost exclusively by the police, the SCP will also be accepting funding requests for an additional key area:

- Countering terrorism (as specified in the City of London Policing Plan 2020–23)

In your application, you must demonstrate the **need** for your initiative, the **means** by which you will deliver it and how you will **evaluate** the outcome.

Funding will be granted on a 12-month basis. We strongly recommend that applicants seek match-funding from other sources, so that initiatives are not solely dependent on funding from the SCP POCA Fund.

You can find out more about the Safer City Partnership and view the Strategic Plan 2019–22 [here](#).

You can find out more about the City of London Policing Plan 2020–23 [here](#).

Key themes

While focusing on one of the key priorities outlined above, the SCP is eager to encourage applications which also consider at least one of the key themes set out below:

- Combatting and reducing youth crime and knife crime
- Ensuring the most vulnerable are protected
- Promoting community engagement and cohesion
- Promoting respect and fostering dialogue
- Protecting individuals and communities from exploitation (including sexual exploitation and modern slavery)
- Protecting individuals and communities from the threat of radicalism
- Tackling hate crime
- Tackling the causes of anti-social behaviour
- Tackling violence and domestic abuse
- Victim and perpetrator intervention and prevention
- Youth inclusion in creating safer communities

Who can apply?

- Not-for-profit or voluntary organisations, community groups, charities and community interest companies (CICs) registered with Companies House or the Charity Commission
- Organisations which work to improve the safety and the reduction of crime in the City of London (including issues which may lead to the committing of crime)
- Organisations which provide a free-of-charge and confidential service
- Organisations which provide a service regardless of whether a crime has been reported to the police

What will my organisation require to be eligible for funding?

- A Diversity, Inclusion and Equality policy (or equivalent) which you are able to produce and demonstrate your organisation's commitment to
- A governing/founding document which articulates the organisation's charitable/community aims (including provision – such as a dissolution clause – in the event that the organisation ceases to exist)
- A management committee with at least three unrelated members; CICs should have at least three unrelated Directors registered with Companies House
- Implementation of appropriate Safeguarding procedures for organisations working with vulnerable individuals and/or children
- Organisations must have a bank account, with a minimum of two signatures (of unrelated persons) for withdrawals, together with a constitution/articles of association/trust deeds, or similar document
- The ability to provide annual audited accounts and/or financial records which illustrate balance of funds and a breakdown of income and expenditure (N.B. organisations which have been established in the last financial year will not be excluded from the application process on the basis that they lack a set of annual accounts).

What can't the Safer City Partnership provide funding for?

- Consultancy fees and feasibility studies
- Core running costs alone (although funding for a portion of core running costs will be considered in order to support the initiative seeking SCP funding)
- For profit endeavours or applications made by profit-making organisations
- General fundraising appeals
- Grant-making organisations
- Individuals
- Loan or debt repayments
- National or regional organisations, unless the grant is ring-fenced for use within the City of London/a City of London branch exists within the organisation
- Overseas travel
- Projects of a political nature or that promote a particular political view
- Recurring funding for initiatives beyond 12 months (projects may run for longer than 12 months, but the SCP will only provide funding for a 12-month period)
- Retrospective funding
- Statutory services

Evaluation and monitoring

A vital aspect of your application will be the procedures you plan to implement to monitor the success of your initiative over its lifetime. This may include: reaching key milestones by agreed dates; targets for outreach with particular groups; or the delivery of a set number of workshops within a particular timeframe.

All projects which are successful in receiving Safer City Partnership funding will be subject to assessment or review by the SCP, select partners or local police bodies throughout the lifetime of the initiative. The SCP will also require the completion of an evaluation document at the end of the funding period.

All funding granted must be spent in line with the proposals made in your application and the agreement made with the SCP in relation to the funding remit. Evaluation by your organisation must demonstrate this and will be a focus of SCP monitoring. Any improper use of funds may require the partial or total repayment of the grant to the SCP. Any unused funds after 12 months must be returned to the SCP.

You must inform the Safer City Partnership immediately of any significant changes in the nature or focus of your initiative over the funding period. You must seek the permission of the SCP before any changes are made to how grant funding can be utilised. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal or requested repayment of funds.

Local networks and your project

It is recommended that you reach out to the City of London Crime Prevention Association and/or your local community police (as well as other appropriate community representatives) in relation to your proposed initiative. This can be helpful in building support and developing ideas in relation to your project, not only during the application process, but also during the implementation stages. Additionally, it is useful to develop a local network in order to avoid your project duplicating pre-existing services.

Application process

Stage One: Expression of Interest

Stage Two: Presentation

Stage Three: Completion of formal Application Form

Assessment criteria

1. The initiative is in line with at least one of the Safer City Partnership's 'priority areas'
2. The initiative considers at least one of the Safer City Partnership's 'key themes'
3. The need for the initiative is clearly demonstrated with supporting evidence
4. The initiative benefits the people and/or businesses of the City of London
5. The budget is cost-effective and all aspects of requested funding provisions are eligible under SCP POCA Funding criteria
6. The initiative will increase community safety and/or enables crime prevention/reduction

7. The initiative will have a positive and long-term impact on the City of London
8. The initiative demonstrates clear tools for evaluating and monitoring metrics for success

Please note: During these unprecedented times, assessment for 2021–22 will also consider the ability of initiatives to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, such as lockdown and social distancing. We understand the challenges this will pose for a number of applicants seeking funding. While we will take this context into account, we would encourage all applicants to clearly demonstrate how their initiatives will be able to operate during the pandemic and adapt to potential changes in Government advice.